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THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

9 MAY 1980

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FRANCE

The bad boy from Clichy

By Richard Cobb

CAREY SCHOFIELD:
Mesrine
The Life and Death of a Supercrook
200 pp. Penguin. Paperback, 95p.
014 00567 6

There is something about the appearance of Jacques Mesrine that is familiar. A large, bulky, but athletic-looking man, clearly in good physical trim—this is accentuated by the photographs by the one of he is wearing a track-suit and gym shoes—his wide face and big dark eyes with very large pupils are not without an amused bonhomie and even a certain benevolence. "Fair enough," he might say, "but rather moonlike face, whether framed with a beard or not, it is the beard that hints at benevolence—at a restaurant table would be to sit opposite an attentive and generous host, with the promise of a very good meal indeed ahead of it, certainly the face of a gourmet; and, given the white cap, it could also be that of a chef. It is hard not to find something rather reassuring in what is clearly the face of an eating man, increasingly so, in his mid-thirties or early forties, with the beginnings of a double chin. The lower lip, often concealed by a curving moustache, is both sensual and well adjusted to a glass: a drinking man then, too, and certainly a womanizer.

In short, the face of a *jouisseur* of the most straightforward type: food, wine and women, and preferably all three together; there is a happy photograph of Jacques at the end of a meal, the bill paid, post-digestively, with a look of sated satisfaction, sitting next to the conventional, pretty, though rather stupid-looking Jacqueline Derache, his French-Canadian mistress (with, alas, an accompanying French-Canadian accent—we are told that Jacques made her keep her mouth shut in public places, in case she should give away her origin and thus help to establish his own identity. That is what the author says, but one cannot help thinking the reason was that the best way of dealing with *l'accent québécois* is to ask its owner to keep it turned off. "Look at me," he seems to say, "there is no food in my mouth, there is no woman I cannot buy, there is no woman I cannot attract and ensnare." And so it is also the rather naive face

of a man who exults in the display of conventional success and who needs to flaunt that success in public.

I could not at once discover why the face seemed familiar. Then I spotted it: there was a distinct reminder of the Genevan actor and film-star, Michel Simon, though without Simon's famous *monstrous*, his undaringly spoilt, bulky but surviving into middle and old age, a clue indicating that "Boudu" had never grown up and that "Clo-Clo", in *Jeun de la Lune*, still expected to be humoured in his childish cravings. The eyes, though much larger, reflect Simon's alert malice. The parallel may go further than a lingering physical resemblance. For Simon was a natural anarchist, a true *souffleur*, who ended up surrounding himself with a whole menagerie of animal dependents. But got considerable satisfaction from scoring points against Authority. Mesrine managed to get himself rapidly expelled both from the Collège de Jullien and from Chapal; and it is hard to believe that any Swiss Protestant establishment would have long succeeded in accommodating an adolescent Michel Simon.

Of course, one should not take the parallel too far. Simon was quite repulsively dirty, his table manners were revolting, he slobbered in his soup and drank wine, *au même le gout*, like a tramp. "Clo-Clo", towards the end of his life, no longer needed to act a tramp, he was a *clochard*. Mesrine was quite fanatically clean; after each escape he would wash elaborately, as if to remove the institutional smell of prison; he had excellent table manners, and kept the food off his expensive, rather showy silk ties. Yet, as with an aging and impish "Clo-Clo", there is something unmistakably childlike about Mesrine. One of the illustrations depicts him flicking through a crime magazine, with his own picture on the cover, reading all about it in one of his many hideouts. There is laughter at the corners of his large eyes. And look at him photographed triumphantly brandishing his police card, Prefecture de Police, a tricolour diagonal through the middle, dated November 22, 1975, and stamped with the seated Republic surrounded by spikes, the very thing, in fact, that he holds up, so it is also the rather naive face

straight-faced, a tramp in his perilous game with M. Broussard, the director of the Police Judiciaire. Both pictures are much more convincing than the one that depicts him staring from behind a pointed sub-machine gun.

There is something in his attitude, even when in physical repose, sitting down at a restaurant table, or chatting to three warders in a courtyard of the Santé, that suggests a tip-top physical condition, constant training, and an ability, held in reserve, to move very fast indeed. No wonder the prison authorities got worried when the warders reported that he was doing daily progress. Though an unusually large man, he could move with the speed and decisiveness of a puma. Mesrine trained for crime and escape with the assiduity of an Olympic athlete.

We are ready to believe too, if only from a look in those half-humorous yet coldly implacable eyes, that he was also a master at disguise, could convincingly hobble on a stick, could transform himself into a bald and arrogant *énergique*, a timid hairdresser in his white apron, a plausible student, or oddity, the double of the present West German Chancellor. Disguise was absolutely essential to his long survival, especially when his unusual build would pick him out from the crowd, and when, as a naturally gregarious Parisian, he liked to work the streets, eat in restaurants, do rather careful shopping, or merely linger in his favourite quarters of north-east Paris.

On at least one occasion, disguise seems to have been pushed to the limits of carnival: while holding up the octogenarian millionaire, M. Lohière, he had himself photographed wearing a mask representing the enlarged, but unmistakable, features of Georges Marquis, an indication, the author suggests, of his admiration for the French communist leader, though rather an odd way to express it.

It is true that, by this time, Mesrine was going downhill very rapidly, perhaps owing to his increasing isolation and to the fact that he was becoming more and more cut off from the easy sociability of the Paris streets and markets. He was beginning to repeat to anyone who would be prepared to listen—and even to have been highly unwise

not to have been prepared to listen, for it was generally Mesrine who did all the talking—the boring and repetitive drivel of *gauchisme* and instant Revolution. In his last fantasy, he had managed to convince himself that he was in fact a revolutionary; this might have been harmless enough, merely rather trying for his criminal friends and for his mistresses, had he not established contacts with the international of political killers. It was just as well that the police caught up with him when they did. *Gauchiste* bores are trying enough; but armed, quick-moving and highly skilled ones are dangerous recruits to the armies of nihilism.

Not that there was anything very surprising about this final evolution of a man dominated above all by his limitless conceit. If the revolutionary left needed him, as years earlier, or so it is suggested, though the evidence is thin, the OAS had called in his skills, well then here he was, "Fais et dis-moi", and ready for something really big and that would make the world sit up. What indeed was the difference between a killer of the right, a killer of the left, and just an all-round, all-purpose killer? Only, in the case of the second, the dreary verbiage of mindless fanaticism. There was absolutely nothing funny about the Jacques Mesrine of those last few months.

Carey Schofield has had the advantage, denied to most of us, of having heard Mesrine speak. There seems no doubt at all, from his almost instant success with a great many people: police chiefs, *commissaires*, ordinary *agents*, warders, shop-keepers, bank-clerks, writers, neighbours, that the Clichy-born Mesrine was a *bon vivant* of the top flight, a smooth-tongued charmer in the best Paris tradition. We do not know whether he had a Parisian accent; given his middle-class background, it is likely that he did not. But there is plenty of evidence of his ability to charm, to inspire confidence, to make people feel important and to put them at ease.

All his numerous neighbours—and he was always on the move across the map of Paris and its suburbs—refer to his politeness, and he seems to have succeeded in softening the hearts of *concierges*—though,

predictably, he was betrayed by a succession of these—and to have introduced an easy-going hilarity in police vans, on his way to courts.

One of the photographs shows him deep in conversation with three warders from the Santé, one of whom, a smallish man, can be seen looking up to him in amused ease, in the attitude of a bird waiting to be fed by its mother, his mouth half-open in wait of the *drôleries* issuing from the big man—*voilà* rather too in *contrepétite*, in the manner of *les Albums de la Comtesse*—the other two appear to be laughing, the biggest with his shoulders shaking. It is a marvellous conversation-piece in an enclosed prison courtyard. Mesrine was talking to a purpose. He was out to establish friendly relations with the three warders and he was talking himself into more time outside in order to examine every detail of the yard and the wall.

The author was clearly captivated by his conversation, as well, he might have been—it was an important scoop for a girl just down from Cambridge to get an interview with Mesrine while he was on the run in Paris—but, through the filter of translation, it is impossible to convey the velvet of his voice and the smoothness of his accompanying gestures, the warmth of his greeting, and his rather wry turn of humour. French is the language of flattery and hospitality, of rapidly accessible intimacy and complicity, of comforting admission into a closed, mysterious, fraternal circle. None of this can be rendered in English; and as the author's French is very defective, pedestrian and inaccurate, there is an important element in Mesrine's formidable arsenal that is almost completely missing. All we can say is that he seems to have had a considerable and readily accessible fund of small-talk. He was even able to persuade a French-Canadian lady from Perce that he and his Parisian mistress, a Pigeon prostitute, were Belgians, going on to talk at great length about life in Brussels, one of the few capitals that he had never visited. It is true that a French-Canadian lady from Perce would have few positive notions about "les bons Belges" and Mesrine may have been feeding

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Representing England

By William Vaughan

Terence Clarke Representational Paintings
Edward Toteah Gallery, 39 Floral Street, WC2.

In recent years representational painting has been staging a comeback. Perhaps comeback is too strong a word, since it never completely went away; but now it is back in the limelight—so well thought of, in fact, that it has become smart in some circles to dismiss the more adventurous modes of the twentieth century (notably abstraction) as aberrations which can now be dispensed with. This is clearly silly. No change of taste should blind us to the greatness of artists like Mondrian and Rothko. They have immeasurably enhanced our sensibilities, and even representational painting has gained from them.

Terence Clarke, a British artist in his twenties, paints in a representational style that is very much of our times. His work shows many debts to the great masters of the twentieth century—both representational and otherwise. This is only to be expected in a young artist and does not in any way obscure the fact that he possesses a genuine sensibility. His response to his subjects is direct and convincing. Although he transforms what he has observed in the process of making a picture, he retains a strong sense of local environment. The painting reproduced in the publicity for his show is entitled "In England"; one can hardly imagine most of his pictures being of anywhere else. Decaying sculleries and crotches industrial landscapes pre-

dominate. Such scenes have been with us for a long time and have been the occasion of much nostalgic celebration in art and literature; nowadays they seem to be almost indispensable. Clarke records them with great sureness, using stringent colouring, emphatic detail and achieving a telling sense of atmosphere. He is nowhere more traditionally English, in fact, than in his feeling for the nuances of light in a landscape. In "Quotidian Picture" this results in a remarkable confrontation between an angelic blue sky with fleecy clouds and the murky terrain of railway tracks and derelict buildings below.

There is much that is admirable about such work. It is not showy or startling, but it has undeniable power. This, it seems to me, is Clarke's strength, and I feel he begins to become instructive when he tries to hold his scenes with additional layers of meaning. He is given to pronouncements—some of which are on display at the gallery—and it is in his paintings his pictures with titles that seem grandiose. A desolatory girl before a lonely beach becomes "The Logic of Memory", a view across a suburban station "In Prison of the Poetic". Over-ambitious titles are perhaps a more than irritating, but there is a pictorial device in evidence that is more disconcerting. This is the use of large-scale figures to signal the mood of his biggest landscapes. No doubt the sense of unease that they communicate is partly intentional, but it is also partly due to uncertainties of handling—uncertainties that are at variance with the confident treatment of buildings and natural scenery. However, Clarke is clearly developing and has already come a long way. As he himself says— "It is still deceptively difficult to do the simple thing."

Remembered acts

By Rosemary Dinnage

La Comédie-Française 1680-1980
Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

This year is the centenary of the Comédie-Française. At the Bibliothèque Nationale its foundation, and history are being celebrated by a lavishly illustrated volume.

The first half of the exhibition, in a less splendid salon, covers the Comédie-Française's history from 1680 to 1792. It has been divided into two parts, covering, respectively, the first two centuries of its existence and the third. The long seventeenth-century Galerie Mazarine, resplendent with silk and gilt and painted ceiling, is the scene of the first half. From the documents hoarded over the centuries by the Société des Comédiens Français here is the very *lettres de cachet* signed by Louis XIV, authorizing the amalgamation of the troupe Molière had led with another company, to form "La seule Troupe des comédiens du Roy". This, it seems, was a royal ploy to outbid the popular rival company of Italian players. They can be seen—Pantolon, Scaramouche, Arlequin—in a large painting of 1670, before the Comédie-Française's foundation, but an engraving after Watteau, "Départ des comédiens français en 1687", shows that they must have been temporarily routed.

The continuity and sense of tradition of the Société have been extraordinary. Objects of big, painted leather chairs, *chaises à la Molière*, *Malade Imaginaire*; letters, manuscripts, architects' plans, account books, first editions of plays with the producers' notes in the margins, all in excellent preservation. There are marble busts of Racine and Corneille, and portraits of great *sociétaires* in gloriously historic poses. Some of the costumes on display, stiff with embroidery and brilliant, date from the eighteenth century. There is a tantalizing glimpse of an opening scene of one of that century's classicized "institutions" of Shakespeare:

Ophelia: Ah! permettez-moi de vous dire, Madame, qu'un sang de vos genoux vous détournait mon âme.

In the modern period, photographs, costumes, and maquettes show the troupe's classical repertoire has been maintained; the company has played Beckett, Brecht, Ibsen, O'Neill, Cocteau, Ionesco, Shaw. Some of the maquettes of stage sets are exquisite, but indicate how important scenery and production have become—and sometimes how exceptional: inventive Shakespeare's *Le Songe d'une nuit d'été* seems to have been played on bicycles. The exhibition ends with photographs of the work shops where all props and costumes are produced: a room where wigs, shoes, lace, and periwigs from 300 years of theatrical history and 2,800 different plays.

A selection of paintings from the modern City Art Gallery will be touring Britain, though the classical repertoire has been maintained; the company has played Beckett, Brecht, Ibsen, O'Neill, Cocteau, Ionesco, Shaw. Some of the maquettes of stage sets are exquisite, but indicate how important scenery and production have become—and sometimes how exceptional: inventive Shakespeare's *Le Songe d'une nuit d'été* seems to have been played on bicycles. The exhibition ends with photographs of the work shops where all props and costumes are produced: a room where wigs, shoes, lace, and periwigs from 300 years of theatrical history and 2,800 different plays.



Terence Clarke's "In England", from the exhibition discussed here.

Reducible voltage

By Stephen Fender

Towards a Nuclear Future
ICA

The public utilities are a natural focus for paranoid fantasies, since one person, or a small group, can control the heat, light, power and water of millions connected to the grids. The contemporary argument over whether the electricity business should go nuclear has something in common, therefore, with petitions against fluoride in the water supply; that is to say, the "debate" is not restricted to rational exchange.

Something of this idea seems to lie behind the Pip Simmons Theatre Group production running at the ICA until May 17. The only real debate here is in the programme notes. Once inside the theatre, the audience is subjected to a conflict between the cynical presentation of the "pro" lobby and the amplified noise, music and contempt of the "anti". A media man coaches a young public relations spokesman (beautifully played by Roderic Leigh) in the arts of defending the nuclear industry: how to appear sincere and unassuming, when to tell disarming jokes, how to deploy the dead language of pseudo-involvement ("it is, in a very real sense, your problem"). As the spokesman gets into his stride, surrounding figures wake from apathetic stupor and put on gas masks. Later they come to life, take up their instruments and begin to interrupt his patter with expressions of disbelief, slogans, songs, pamphleteering and visits up the gangway to the audience.

In the midst of this confusion they enact three tableaux: the unexplained death of Karen Silkwood, who worked in an Oklahoma plutonium plant and stole documents to prove that her employers had ignored safety regulations; the near-disaster at Three Mile Island, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; when a nuclear power plant ran out of control; and a band of terrorists seizing a power station.

From a theatrical point of view, the best of this idea is the Harrisburg disaster. The actors stand behind a huge chromium-plated bumper taken from the most debaucherous stage of American automobiles, and lighted up with at least twenty lights. As the crisis escalates, the stage is lit in neutral tones by a female computer voice of the kind made fami-

ly by television space operas, the lights wink ever more furiously and the electric synthesizer crescendoes in pipe and rumble.

Of course the Group is not intelligent to offer this as an argument against nuclear energy. On a second level of irony, it is the protesters who are seen as exploiting and overbearing. They too are into public relations: members of the audience who signed a petition against nuclear power on their way into the theatre had their names read out in the performance. A neat trick, showing how even the good guys beguile the public. Their pitch is the time-tested generality of the mountebank: noticed anything wrong with your health recently, they ask the audience; "illness?" the audience replies.

Another joke is that in this show it is the opponents of nuclear energy who have all the power—not only in organization (indeed, orchestration) of superior numbers but in current for their loudspeakers, synthesizers and electric guitars—and none of the arguments. When the power runs out, as the industry says it will if we continue to rely on fossil fuels, what will poor robin do then? Music will have still, among the candles (strings, a harmonium, a kazoo and saxophones supplemented the electronic gear, and even if the aggressive cellist was obviously a mountebank, he was hitting all the notes), but the voice, at least, have to come down to the level of the opponents and their there. By then, though, the debate will not matter. The unother of the jokes.

The problem, oddly enough, is this most theatrical of groups, a theatrical one. Can a presentation of under an hour and a half—can any play—develop and maintain such Jamesian subtlety? James himself came to grief on stage, in the humiliating repartee to Guy Damville. Brecht used a bottle up his alienation-effects. In the production in *Galileo* in which the brilliant singers announce the demise of cosmic order, in moments more more theatrical than the foundations play. But in *Topsy* and *Nuclear Future* the irony and the theatricality soap into the whole fabric. The gruff-faced actors were "acting" even when they came up the aisles to proselytize the audience, and in one knew when to dim-out that might, or might not have been the end. The fact of the first night was embarrassing. Perhaps that was the intention.

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Roote and Gibbs and Lush and Lamb

By Blake Morrison

The Nothorse
Hampstead Theatre

I wrote *The Nothorse* in the winter of 1958. I put it aside for further deliberation and made no attempt to have it produced at the time. I then went on to write *The Caretaker*. In 1979 I re-read *The Nothorse* and decided it was worth presenting on the stage. I made a few cuts but no changes.

Not exactly a new Pinter, then, nor a revival, but a play he thought better of and not one he can have totally forgotten, either, whatever his programme note might imply: a section of *The Nothorse* (the interrogation of Lamb) was lifted out to become a sketch in his own right, "Apprentice", in 1961 and Pinter allowed the original manuscript of *The Nothorse* to be seen by Martin Esslin, who describes the play in detail in his study *The Peopled World*, suggesting that it "was discarded because the author realized that his future lay in the area of realism". Not quite unfamiliar territory, but an even nevertheless a chance to be clearer about the shape of Pinter's development.

The Nothorse is set in an institution whose nature is never entirely

made known to us (the staff refer to "patients" and use the terms "rest home" and "convalescent home") but which seems to be that of a mental hospital. The patients are known by numbers, not names, and remain offstage: the staff, in their grey suits and impersonal surroundings, are the only people we see. Roote, the director (an ex-army man), Gibbs, his immediate subordinate, Miss Cutts, their mistress, and Lush, a man in his thirties—these are the four principal characters and during the day and evening of the action much of their time is taken up in investigating two mysteries: the death of patient 6457 and the birth of a child to patient 6159. Suspicion is centred on a fifth character, Lamb, an innocent-seeming as the nurse suggests; blame, after a débâcle in which all but one of the staff are massacred by the patients, officially falls on Roote; but Gibbs might also be guilty—we are never sure, nor meant to be.

Pinter's play isn't really the thriller which such a plot summary is in danger of making it sound to be; but nor is it the "grotesque fantasy" populated by "gargoyles" rather than human beings which Martin Esslin led us to suppose. In the Hampstead production, directed by Pinter himself, there's a marvelously substantial performance of Roote by Derek Newark, with good support from James Grant as Gibbs. The other actors are less successful

in bringing out the play's comedy: Robert East has a nice line in languorous, exasperated stances but seems too dry and genteel for the part of Lush, which should have something of the suppressed violence of Mick in *The Caretaker* and Foster in *No Man's Land*; Roger Davidson isn't quite confidently unconfident enough as Gibbs; and Angela Pleasance as the sexy-but-sadistic Miss Cutts ("You like to get your hands round someone's neck," Gibbs accuses her) is a bit sub-Tutin.

Pinter criticism, largely because of its preoccupation with silence and absence, has overlooked the extent to which his plays are about power. Roote, like Mick in *No Man's Land*, maintains his authority only precariously: he tyrannizes, worries about falling strength, insists on being called "Sir" and not being called "Colonel" (except by the head porter, Tobin) and is afraid that the patients do not like him and that the staff are "taking the piss". His inferior, like Davies in *The Caretaker* (on which this play inevitably sheds some light) are not sure where they stand with him, how far they can go when they may overstep the mark ("Don't think I can't squash you on a plate as easy as look at you", Roote warns Lush). The *Nothorse* of the title has something to do with questions of power and pressure: Roote is feeling the

heat; he also makes life hot for others. So, too, in the interrogation sequence, Gibbs and Miss Cutts give Lamb a grilling or roasting.

Lamb's name has other associations. However subtly edited by late Pinter, *The Nothorse* remains early Pinter, and as such enjoys playing with a symbolic framework. The action takes place on Christmas Day, and there are several references to Easter; a child is born, a man dies, a father is sought, Lamb is accused and tried, Roote speaks of himself as a "delegate" of some higher power. The Christian references are lightly handled but as typical of early Pinter as the harsh monosyllabic names (Roote, Gibbs, Lush, Doug, Beck, Paul, Tuck, Dodds, Time and Peet) the heavy use of alliteration and euphony ("It's a Christmas cake Colonel, cooked by the cook"), and the note of social protest against bureaucratic dehumanization. Some of the play's elements are indeed early in the point of nature—the monosyllabic names, for instance, and the surreal offstage noises—and others aren't fully integrated: it's easy to see why the interrogation with electrodes (here literally boxed off from the rest of the action) was taken out to make another play. But early Pinter, even bottom-drawer Pinter, is worth the mature, top drawer work of just about anyone else around, and *The Nothorse* more than justifies its retrieval.

The O'Casey centenary

By Katherine Worth

The centenary of Sean O'Casey's birth is being celebrated with a vigour which some hope is the full extent and diversity of his artistic achievement are at last being recognized. There has never been a shortage of praise for the Dublin "Joxer" and the Paycock, his two best-known plays, and his "chess" and "Fluther and company" arguing in the bar regardless of the orator outside calling the citizens to revolution—these are the images likely to come to most theatrical minds when O'Casey is mentioned. But the plays written after *The Plough and the Stars* in 1926 have had a more confused reception.

We are still not seeing productions of his experiments in more fantastic and dream-like modes: no centenary production as yet, for instance, of *Cock-a-Doodle-Do*, *Dundee*, or *Dionysian dancing cock*, the cause of havoc and rebellious pleasure in the puritanical village of Nydanavre. All the same, there is an encouraging variety of approach in the centenary offerings. *Junio and the Plough* has been televised, *The Plough and the Stars* had an airing in advance of the occasion, and the first Dublin play, *The Shadow of a Gunman*, is being given a sensitive production by the Royal Shakespeare Company (reviewed in the *Times* on April 11), a fitting compliment to a playwright who was an ardent Shakespearean. The Abbey Theatre has returned the compliment, so to speak, with Hugh Hunt's production of *Red Roses for Me*—undoubtedly a Dublin play, first performed there and dealing with a painful moment of Dublin history, the 1913 strike, but opening with a fine Shakespearean flourish: a "Methink-like flourish" at the door, followed by lines from *King Henry VIII* which Mrs Breydon is helping Ayemond to learn for an amateur performance.

The visual unexpectedness of this scene—the working-class woman in the slubby tennement draped in a velvet cloak—and speaking Shakespeare's lines—was nicely used at the start of Alan Gibson's television production of the play to emphasize a spirit which raises Ayemond and his mother above their material poverty. *Red Roses for Me*, the camera captured the rich variety of human expressions on the faces gathered in Mrs Breydon's room. Ayemond's eyes of Harry or Barney, uttering at what was to come. The final scene in the dance-hall was powerfully ushered in by such a view

the threatened strike. Always it returned to register, in the sensitive face of John Kavanagh's Ayemond, the tragic potentiality of all this discord. With the aid of scrupulous acting—excellent in all three productions—the play survived, if only just, the testing third act which represents the force of Ayemond's social vision through a mystical transformation scene. For a few moments, in a sudden glow, the disconsolate unemployed loungers and flower-sellers on the Liffey bridge take on the high colour and style of a heroic past and look forward to the heroic future for which Ayemond is prepared to sacrifice his life in the strikers' march. A fine handling of light, with the windows of houses across the river seen glimmering, created a genuinely poetic moment. The rest of the scene fell short of the un-earthy prophetic quality O'Casey wanted: we did not see Ayemond's head in a streak of sunlight, "looking like the severed head of Dunn-Bo speaking out of the darkness". But on the earthly side of things it was entirely convincing.

Predictably, *The Silver Tassie* presented the biggest problems: the modulation of tone O'Casey calls for between the personal and the vast impersonal of war proved beyond the capacity of the small screen. The great war scene of the second act was composed by the playwright like a painting—it was executed for the first production by Augustus John—and the camera tried hard to give us the full symbolism by tracking from one part of the scene to another, but the detail of the shattered Christ, now on the Croucher, sitting motionless in tin hat and gas cape like a grey sculpture, intoning the terrible question from Ezekiel, "Shall these bones live?" But the effect was over-fragmented, so, too, were the close-ups which were broken up among individual soldiers, the camera tracking from one face to another. This added to the difficulties the actors had in modulating from colloquial Irish and Cockney chat to exalted, dramatic, and intoned in Gregorian style (the effect much admired in C. B. Cochran's original stage production). There was some imaginative and effective use of close-ups, however, to mark the movement from one act to another; we looked into the approaching "scene" through the eyes of Harry or Barney, uttering at what was to come. The final scene in the dance-hall was powerfully ushered in by such a view

first the wounded hero's suffering eyes, then a memorial tablet to the fallen, under it the blinded Teddy; and so into the frenetic dancing in which the survivors of the war ruthlessly assert their right to life and love, leaving the paralyzed and the blind man to help each other if they can.

Literature was as important to O'Casey as theatre, as we are reminded in one of the essays in *Books*. Welcome to is the *Irish University Review*; John Jordan discusses O'Casey's literary attitudes and points to some of the ways in which the plays and his splendid autobiographies complement each other. The original six volumes of the autobiography were collected in a two-volume paperback edition by Macmillan in 1963. It has now been re-edited by Pan Books. Welcome too is the *Irish University Review*, with its informed and up-to-date studies, including an interesting analysis by Alan Gibson of the impact made on O'Casey by the early life in the East Wall area of Dublin and an informative account by Michael O'Aodha of O'Casey on the Irish radio. In this issue, too, Ronald Ayling analyses O'Casey's first extant play, *The Forester's Festival*, now for the first time published in Britain by Colin Smythe, and in the USA by the New York Public Library (91pp, 0 87304 273 8). For O'Casey's admirers it is an interesting piece. Easy, of course, to see why it was rejected by the Abbey: the dialogue is stiff, especially when the young working-class idealist, obviously a prototype of Ayemond, is holding forth; and the structure is weak: the whole last act is taken up with anti-climactic squabbles over the mother's plan to have her son's dead body taken into the church where he was once a worshipper.

But how sad that Lady Gregory and Yeats did not respond more encouragingly, for there are virtues in the preface work; much fire and some characteristic humour, as when the subversive Catholic working man takes advantage of being alone to reflect adversely on his bossy employer—"Protestants are curious animals". O'Casey was able to the end to give himself the advice the Abbey did not give: in re-writing parts of the play in *Red Roses for Me*, he made out of the grief of the bereaved mother, of the most touching of all dramatic scenes of mourning, a quality well captured in the television production.

Oxford University Press

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The new Spring titles include Cobbe's *English Gardener*, £1.95; Richard Jefferies' *The Hills and the Vale*, £1.95; W. H. Davies' *Autobiography of a Super-Tramp*, £1.95; Helen Morley's *Portrait of a Chef*, £1.95; *The Shorter Strachey*, £2.95; Evelyn Waugh's *Edmund Campion*, £1.95; Stephen Costen's *Bulwerian*, £2.95; and the National Childbirth Trust's *Pregnancy and Parenthood*, £1.95

to the editor

Roosevelt's Foreign Policy

Sir,—In his review of my book, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945* (February 22), D. C. Watt tells us that there is a New Deal school offering "a version of the 'good guys' and 'bad guys' approach to history". It is not my book, or this so-called New Deal school, which suffers from this simplistic or reductionist approach, but rather Mr Watt's review. Mr Watt is so intent on attacking F.D.R.'s handling of foreign affairs that he loses sight of the fact that good history seeks first to explain and only secondarily to judge. The trouble with this school, Watt says, is that it proceeds from a "purely nationalist framework" and fails to apply the insights of political science to its source materials. Perhaps it is Mr Watt's grounding in political science which makes his assertions about F.D.R.'s foreign policy as muddled and wrong-headed as they are.

Focusing his attention almost exclusively on the years 1933-37, Watt declares Roosevelt's nationalism and insists that he could have acted otherwise by taking account of international conditions and responding to them with constructive economic and political actions. Mr Watt cannot find words strong enough "to condemn Roosevelt's international role in the years 1933-37", and he wonders "whether the President was in fact so dominated by domestic political considerations" as historians, "incapable of grasping the international environment in which he acted", think. The answer, which is transparent to anyone who carefully studies the making of American foreign policy in this period, is yes. Moreover, the one "slightly out of touch with reality" was not Roosevelt and the historians who have explained his nationalistic actions in these years as the consequences of irresistible domestic economic and political pressures, but Mr Watt. His suggestion that Roosevelt could have secured an outcome to the London Economic Conference which would have greatly benefited the American and world economies is even less persuasive today than when Herbert Hoover made it in 1933-35. Moreover, Watt's assertion that Roosevelt's actions in 1933 damaged "Britain's principal role in the containment of European authoritarianism" ascribes powers to F.D.R. he never had, and offers a glib rationalization of British timidity which no thoughtful historian at this late date would accept.

Mr Watt's capacity for misunderstanding is astounding. Roosevelt never saw a threat to democracy in America from Alf Landon. F.D.R.'s concern in 1936 was with the consequences for democracy of the sequences in any future election from anything less than a ringing endorsement for the one democratic administration in the world which offered hope that a democratic rule could function more effectively than the totalitarian ones then so strongly on the march. That Landon would do so poorly in the 1936 election was something that only a very few in the United States foresaw.

Again, Mr Watt's depiction of Roosevelt's support of the Reciprocal Trade Act as consistently strong and of the President's Quarantine Speech as the product of "a long line of proposals for economic warfare in time of peace which developed into the programme of economic pressure on Japan" are distortions of historical reality. Doubtless, the Ruciman and Eli-

bank papers demonstrate F.D.R.'s support of reciprocal trade, but they cannot eliminate the fact that for a while Roosevelt used the Reciprocal Trade Act to encourage international cooperation and economic nationalism at the same time. Nor does this leave the reader of my book, as Mr Watt says, "with the President stultifying Hull's Reciprocal Trade Program". . . . As I make abundantly clear, after some eighteen months of equivocation, Roosevelt finally came down on Hull's side. This is something one cannot learn from reading the Ruciman or Elibank papers, but by studying the rich record available in the Roosevelt Library at Hyde Park. Likewise, a close study of the extensive manuscript records at Hyde Park and the Library of Congress demonstrates not what might and what should have been, but what actually happened. As I conclude about Dorothy Borg said in her excellent book, *The United States and the Far Eastern Crisis of 1933-38*—namely, that F.D.R.'s speech was neither in a series of ad hoc attempts to restrain Japan, nor Mr Watt's conclusions about the origins and consequences of the Quarantine Speech are too linear. And to those, like myself and Dorothy Borg, who have studied intensively how F.D.R. made foreign policy, this is crystal clear.

Mr Watt is perplexed at Roosevelt's reliance on Sumner Welles, whom he intemperately and ungenerously describes as "a fool, a cheat and a liar". Roosevelt's use of Welles is hardly "beyond understanding". As I explain in my book, though Roosevelt himself was somewhat of Welles's peace initiative and post-war plans, F.D.R. valued him as a reflection of the idealism in the country about world affairs. Whatever the shortcomings of this view, it reflected a political reality in the United States which Roosevelt could not afford to ignore. I find Mr Watt's preference for William Bullitt and Norman Davis a bit difficult to understand. Bullitt's emotionalism about foreign affairs and Davis's exaggerated hopes for disarmament and international understanding offered little to recommend them over Welles as realistic foreign policy advisers.

If all the above were not enough to confuse the reader of Mr Watt's review, he concludes by telling us that in spite of Roosevelt's indifference toward achievement, he remained for all his life, and long after, the voice of democracy and the embodiment of all that successfully repelled and eliminated the European brand of populist authoritarianism. To achieve an understanding of this, he argues, Mr Watt urges the need for multinational archival research and "a thorough examination of Roosevelt in his international as well as his American environment", whatever that may mean. That such a study might further our understanding of F.D.R.'s leadership is of course possible. But only if it is free of the prejudices Mr Watt so markedly displays in his review.

ROBERT DALLER,
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Nazis and their Nicknames

Sir,—Hitler may not have been "the greatest Feldherr of all time" —Graf in the company of his contemporaries, so John Keegan in his review of John Gigg's 1943: *The Victory That Never Was* (April 25). He misses the point; *Graf* can be read as either a reference to *Feldherr* or *Griffin* (megalomaniacal top). Consequently it was those who wished to poke fun at the Führer who called him thus, not his readers. Such derision (among the heads of course) was not rare in Nazi Germany. Himmler, for example, had the official title *Reichsführer SS und Chef der deutschen Polizei*, and his first name was Heinrich; so he was referred to as *der Reichsführer*, whereby one must know the initials of his first name, or of Heinrich, but also a pet form of *Heini* (ein richtiger Heini, etc.). It would be interesting to know whether Soviet leaders have attracted similar titles.

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Somerset Maugham

Sir,—In your issue of April 25 you print a long review by Victoria Glendinning, principally devoted to Ted Morgan's biography of Somerset Maugham. She writes: "But he knew, at the time or later, I never met Maugham and have no wish to blacken his character, but credit for generosity should go where it belongs."

CONSTANTINE FITZGIBBON,
St Ann's, Killiney Hill Road, Co. Dublin.

When talking to me about Maugham, Douglas gave me an example of Maugham's financial meanness, which Douglas ascribed to a basic meanness of spirit. Maugham had invited Douglas to lunch at the Villa Mauresque. Douglas was then living in poverty in Antibes. After lunch Maugham told Norman Douglas where (in couple of miles away) and when he could catch a bus home, though Maugham had a car, chauffeur and black market petrol (so this incident must have occurred during the Second World War). Norman Douglas dismissed him to me with a phrase of his that was not unfamiliar: "The wrong sort of sod, my dear."

In his old age Norman Douglas had two benefactors known to me. His old friend "Bryher" gave him a residence on Capri, in the Villa Tuoro. And Graham Greene gave him the money with which to buy the film rights to *South Wind*. This I learnt from Signor

Soldati. I am sure that Norman Douglas never knew the true nature of this unexpected windfall. Certainly Graham Greene never mentioned this to me, nor to anyone I know, at the time or later.

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'A Poison Tree'

Sir,—Stephen H. Ford (Letters, April 4) cites John Blackburn's *A Sour Apple Tree* as a development of Blake's "A Poison Tree" along the lines that L. C. Knights had in mind (February 29). The same theme was developed in the title story of *The Poison Tree*, a collection by Walter Clemons (Houghton Mifflin, 1939).

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'Rear Column'

Sir,—To judge by A. S. Byatt's review of Simon Gray's play *The Rear Column* (Commentary, April 25) it seems that misunderstandings may have arisen about the relationship between the play and the historical events which inspired it. The play is not a documentary. It embodies only a selection of the known facts in what is otherwise a work of creative fiction. Mr Gray will confirm this.

Nor is it fair, either to the fiction or to the history, to see the play as a comment on the "last desperate shakings of British imperialism". Whatever the motives of Stanley and his backers, the motives of his subordinates—some of whom were little more than schoolboys—

had not the remotest conception of the political or cultural implications of their actions. They joined the expedition for the same reasons that those days take young men to be Antarctic. The tragic interest of the events at Yambuya arises from the innocence, not the wickedness, of the participants.

I also note that A. S. Byatt seems inclined to accept the theory advanced by Conrad that Bartle is the original of Conrad's Kurtz. Though it is highly probable that Conrad knew something of the Yambuya tragedy, there exists no known documentary evidence on the point. Moreover, the evidence on the point is that the children of the upper social classes perform better on IQ tests than those of the lower, and that American Caucasian outperform negroes. Mental tests have been condemned as unfair, elitist, biased, an invasion of privacy, and an instrument to oppress further the already downtrodden. It is alleged that whatever intelligence is, intelligence tests do not measure it. The posthumous exposure of an eminent and now notorious professor who had fabricated his test results was treated by the press as an event of cosmic importance, and many practitioners of mental testing have been hounded or even physically assaulted.

This uproar was in part provoked by a lengthy article written by Arthur Jensen in 1969 and entitled "How much can we boost IQ and scholastic achievement?" His answer to this question was "Not much", and he argued that IQ was 80 per cent inherited. His monomaniacal new book, *Bias in Mental Testing*, will do nothing to dispel the furor. Its main theme is that it can be demonstrated that most existing tests are not biased against minority groups, but on the route to this conclusion it touches on many other problems and the early chapters contain a useful exposition of how mental tests are constructed and validated.

The main reasons for supposing that there is some general capacity that corresponds to what we call intelligence are as follows. If intelligence is as follows, it is possible to construct more refined tests of it. Where performance on a question is known not to correlate highly with the hypothetical "g" factor, that question or type of question will not be included in a test designed to measure intelligence. Within this limitation, intelligence tests incorporate as diverse a variety of material as possible, in order to minimize the influence of specific skills in addition, efforts are made to include in the test only material with which all those to whom the test will be administered are equally familiar. Hans Eysenck has pointed out that accurate thermometers were developed in a rather similar way: subjective judgments of temperature are unreliable, but by aiming at consistency of readings under different conditions and across different thermometers, it was possible to develop accurate instruments for measuring temperature.

Measured intelligence correlates reasonably well, but not perfectly, with people's judgments of the intelligence of others. It also predicts scholastic success, though again imperfectly which is hardly surprising since many other factors such as motivation determine successful performance at school or university. As Jensen states, IQ is a much better predictor of scholastic success than socio-economic status.

What does all this tell us? The answer is that people who are good at mentally manipulating one type of material in order to solve an abstract problem tend to be good at mentally manipulating other types of material. The word "abstract" is important since most of the questions set in IQ tests have little relationship to the problems people must solve in the day-to-day business of living. I shall return to this point later.

For the moment, it is enough to note that it is not known how far measures of IQ correlate with insight into oneself and others, skill at conducting personal relationships, or the ability to produce a good work of art. To the extent that abstract mental manipulations matter, they may well be some correlation, but we have no present idea of how much. Moreover, everyday observation of others suggests that there may be little correlation between IQ and that important human quality that we term "wisdom". It is not clear, however, how much of the latter is due to the least misleadingly referred to as "general intelligence", but as "abstract intelligence".

Where mental tests are used for selection, problems of definition do not arise. The demands of the job for which selection is to be made are analysed and a large battery of tests is devised which collectively might be expected to predict suc-

cessful performance on the job: the tests are administered to applicants, and in the light of their subsequent performance that combination of tests which best predicts their success is retained and the other tests are eliminated. Although this procedure can and usually does vastly improve the efficiency of selection, the results are rarely of any theoretical interest. In selecting Royal Air Force rear gunners in the last war, two of the tests devised were to measure the accuracy of potential gunners flung from a gun-turret that could traverse either horizontally or both vertically and horizontally: surprisingly, and for reasons still unknown, the former test was a good predictor of subsequent performance, the latter was not. The adoption of the former test and the elimination of the latter probably saved the lives of many British airmen.

One of the most curious aspects of mental testing is that it has thrown almost no light on how the mind works. Knowledge that is useful to solve intellectual problems varies consistently between individuals over a wide range of problems tells us nothing about the nature of the underlying mental processes. Moreover, we have at present no idea what feature of the brain determines IQ, and the suggestions that have been made, such as the richness of connections between nerve cells or their plasticity, are purely speculative. Mental testing is in fact a subject almost devoid of scientific interest.

Even the claim that IQ is largely inherited is of less importance than at first appears. There are few human traits from longevity to homosexuality, which are not to some extent genetically influenced. It has proved impossible to establish with certainty the exact role of inheritance in determining IQ within Western society, though even discounting the work of the discredited Cyril Burt, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that it does exert considerable influence; this finding is hardly news, since the brain is a bodily organ and the functioning of all other organs is influenced in part by heredity. One of the more comic and most persistent themes running through the story of mental testing is the spectacle provided by the army of Marxist and egalitarian scientists who have attempted to propose ad hoc and implausible hypotheses in order to explain the intelligence of others. It also predicts scholastic success, though again imperfectly which is hardly surprising since many other factors such as motivation determine successful performance at school or university. As Jensen states, IQ is a much better predictor of scholastic success than socio-economic status.

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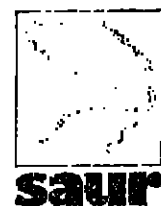
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than on the culture-loaded ones. Jensen interprets this unexpected finding to mean that the culture-free items are a purer test of intelligence than the culturally-loaded items. If blacks genuinely have lower intellectual ability than whites, they would be expected to perform relatively worse on the culture-free items.

Jensen supports this interpretation by showing that if separate factor analyses are carried out on the scores of blacks and whites, the results are consistent with the interpretation that individual items are determined by general intelligence, blacks do relatively worse on items that are the purest measure of general intelligence. He also notes that there is a tendency for blacks to perform relatively worse on non-verbal questions (such as spotting mistakes in pictures) than on verbal ones; although the argument is not a strong one, it might have been expected that performance on verbal items would be more culturally determined than performance on non-verbal ones. If some items are particularly difficult for blacks because they have had different experiences from whites, it might be expected that the items blacks found most difficult would differ from those found most difficult by whites. In general, this appears to be the case—there is little difference in the relative difficulty of different items for blacks and whites. Finally, several attempts have been made to produce tests based on questions that are as culture-free as possible, that is, on materials that are equally familiar both to blacks and whites. Such tests reveal as large differences in black and white performance as do standard intelligence tests.

Jensen also reviews the evidence on whether factors other than the composition of the questions making up the tests could unfairly penalize blacks. He concludes that neither the race nor dialect of the test administrator affects the results nor do his expectations about the testee's probable performance.

Jensen would appear to have established the surprising and unwelcome conclusion that the poor performance of American negroes on IQ tests is in general not caused either by the way the tests are administered or by lack of specific knowledge that is a prerequisite for giving correct answers. He does not consider the question whether there is any more general difference between the background of blacks and whites that might explain the poor showing of the former. One possibility suggests itself. Most items in an IQ test are fairly recent, and the practice of business of living: they are highly abstract, and to answer them one has to enter into the spirit of the game. To anyone not used to playing such intellectual games, the questions might well seem pointless. It may be that the upbringing of American negroes prepares them less well for such intellectual games than does that of whites. This interpretation has been shown to account for much of the poor performance on intelligence tests by certain primitive communities elsewhere in the world, for example, in West Africa and the remotest regions of the USSR.

Members of such communities often do not accept the terms of the questions set and import knowledge derived from their own experiences in answering them. For example, a member of a tribe in Liberia was set the following problem: "All people who own a house pay house tax. Bolma does not pay a house tax. Does Bolma own a house?" He replied that Bolma was a slave, and when asked to justify his answer he said: "Bolma has a house, but is exempted from paying house tax. The government appointed Bolma to collect house tax so they exempted him from paying it." It is clear that this respondent is reasoning intelligently, but is simply not accepting the conventions that in Western society govern the answering of such artificial questions: he does not isolate the question from his own knowledge of the subject matter. It has been shown that in such tribes, schooling produces a large increase in correct answers—it teaches the students to adopt a more abstract approach to intellectual questioning.

Whether the poor performance of American blacks on IQ tests can be explained in a similar way is an open question: the difference between black and white IQ is in fact not diminished by schooling to any great extent. It is, in fact, impossible to estimate at present how

much of the 15-point difference between blacks and whites is genetically determined. Equitarians may find some comfort in a study not quoted by Jensen. It has been found that there is no difference between the IQs of children fathered on German mothers by black and white American soldiers during the occupation of Germany. Unfortunately it could be argued that it takes a negro of above average intelligence to sire a child on a white woman; moreover, the difference in IQ between white and black American soldiers is less than in the general population because the American army does not accept recruits with very low IQs.

I have considered so far the question of whether IQ tests underestimate negro intelligence. There is a second way in which mental tests could be unfair to minorities. Where tests are used for selection, they are often standardized on either a white or a mixed population. If a test underestimates the potential of a minority group, it would be expected that a member of that group would have been selected, perform better on average than a member of the majority group obtaining the same test score. Jensen examines this issue and concludes that where there is a difference in subsequent performance between blacks and whites having the same test scores, blacks actually perform worse. If, therefore, selection is based on a test standardized either on an all-white population or on a mixed population, a given score will on average predict more successful performance for negroes than for whites. It is actually achieved, hence, it cannot be argued that the use of mental tests in selection is unfair to individual blacks—if anything it tends to favour them.

Jensen does not attempt to pronounce on the ethics of reverse discrimination, that is, the deliberate policy of using lower criteria in selection for members of disadvantaged groups than for members of majority groups. But this issue has nothing to do with the use of mental tests; when tests are used for selection, it is a simple matter to use different criteria for different groups. Such a policy is bound to seem unfair to members of majority groups, and indeed several disappointed white applicants to American universities have

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Soul-baring situations

By Rosemary Dinnaage

ANTHONY STORR:

The Art of Psychotherapy
Secker and Warburg/Helmemann Medical Books. £7.95.
0 433 31801 5

It is not a very reassuring thought that there are people in deep trouble, painfully baring their souls to psychotherapists who are wondering "What on earth am I supposed to do?" (Does this happen often in surgery, for instance?) In psychiatry, there is no doubt that it is happening all the time, and Anthony Storr says that his book is written for the beginner who finds himself thus flummoxed. Chiefly the inexperienced doctor in NHS psychiatry. As a beginner's manual it is sound, unpretentious, and free of jargon, and it could probably be equally useful to the GP or to someone who, when asked to go into psychotherapy as a patient, Storr scarcely touches on psychological theory and controversy. He starts from basics—how many chairs in the consulting room, whether to take notes, how to time appointments. Reminiscences, sometimes of his own, are woven into the text. "Understanding" in this kind of way is sometimes called "insight". He proceeds sensibly to what he believes therapy can and cannot achieve, to transference and counter-transference (the reactions of patient and therapist respectively to their very close relationship), to a rough classification of neurotic disorders, and to the question of cure.

He provides just the right, sparing amount of illustration from his own life, as well as references to the efforts of others. I like his brief biographies, appended to each chapter, including Dorothy Parker, Proust, Isak Dinesen, and

already brought suits claiming that they have been unfairly rejected since black applicants with lower qualifications had been accepted in their place. It is impossible, no matter how we strive, to put right all the unfairness of life.

Although many will be reluctant to accept Jensen's claim that most existing mental tests are culturally unfair, *Bias in Mental Testing* is well argued, and as far as I can judge, is an accurate and comprehensive survey of the evidence on bias. It is of limited interest to the layman both because of its technicality and because of the restricted scope of the question to which it is addressed.

It is hard to know what verdict to pass on mental testing. Although Jensen has a missionary's zeal in advocating the use of tests, he is surely right in thinking that they can make the process of selection both fairer and more efficient. Properly validated tests predict success in a given job more accurately than any other method of assessment. Part of the widespread antipathy to tests may in fact be based on their very objectivity. Anyone rejected on the basis of an interview or recommendations can comfort himself with the reflection that human judgment is fallible: the fault lies not in ourselves, but in our assessors. It is more difficult to dismiss failure based on objective tests, though it could be argued that there the fault lies not in ourselves, but in our ancestors.

I have already emphasized that mental testing is an applied technology that can in itself tell us little about how the mind actually works. It is, in fact, true, occasionally thrown up an important problem: for example, dyslexia was identified as a specific disorder almost entirely because some children showed a large discrepancy between their scores on tests of reading and on other intelligence tests. But to understand the nature of dyslexia and to devise appropriate remedies, it is necessary to use other methods of investigation. In the same way, intelligence tests tell us nothing about the nature of the processes underlying problem-solving nor about how to improve intellectual capacity.

The extreme passions aroused by intelligence tests both in those on the left and in those on the right

are misguided. Even if it were established that much of the difference between the average IQ of American whites and blacks is inherited, no logical implication can be drawn that affect how the individual should be treated; the variations in IQ within a race are much greater than the variations between races and an individual's IQ cannot be determined from the colour of his skin. Moreover, as I have already noted, it is a fallacy to suppose that even if individual variations in IQ are largely genetically determined, nothing can be done to raise the IQs of the underprivileged.

Perhaps the most undesirable result of mental testing is that the discovery of large IQ differences between rich and poor and between whites and blacks is likely to increase the sense of inferiority among the underprivileged. It is fortunate indeed that there is no measurable difference in the average IQ of men and women: men tend to do better on tests of spatial ability, and women on tests of verbal proficiency. With considerable precision many tests devised have often deliberately constructed their tests in such a way that the average overall score of men and women would be equal.

However, provided a sufficient variety of questions is incorporated, tests constructed with this outcome in mind also need no difference. Unfortunately, recent work has uncovered a disturbing result, namely, that although the average IQ of men and women is the same, variation in IQ is greater in men than in women. A higher percentage of men are mentally retarded and a higher percentage have very high IQ. There is considerable evidence to support the idea that this difference is genetically caused by the same kind of mechanism that varies in many more men than women being red-green colour blind.

A further undesirable consequence of mental testing is that it may have reinforced the already high premium set by Western society on abstract intelligence. There are after all other virtues in the long run, it may be said, courage, integrity, kindness, and so on. But these virtues may be more important both to the individual and to society, but these traits are less easy to quantify.

the Bible, as well as Laing, Winnicott, Fairbairn, and Freud.

What the therapist can do for the patient, says Storr, is not to understand his meanings for his problems, but to make the incompressible more comprehensible, find connections in what the patient says, point out discrepancies. Success in this obviously depends more on close attention, imagination, and empathy than on theory. What the therapist begins must do, therefore, is to listen, remember, get interested, allow things to happen. Storr advises preparing any pronouncements with "Perhaps..." or "It sounds as if..."—though he perhaps underestimates how powerful even these formulations can sound to the patient, and how difficult it is to avoid benign brainwashing. He has some sharp words, however, for dogmatists, "analysts who believe that their particular variety of analysis is the only true key to human understanding, and that all those who do not pursue this particular path are consigned to outer darkness".

He follows classical psychoanalytical principles in seeing psychotherapy as a purely verbal transaction: "the act of verbalization makes possible critical appraisal. If one can talk about an emotion, or is, at least, at that moment, no longer possessed by it. There is, though, an opposite side to this coin: verbalizing can lead to detachment from good feelings as well as bad, to intellectualization and loss of spontaneity without any great changes within. Storr does suggest, though, that the therapist, by using language and writing, he might also have said that tears, curses, allgences can be as pregnant as hours of talk, that patients may need to regress childishly or act out, that therapy encourages the lowering of defences, but that anything but talk can be something of a double blind. But these are perhaps ques-

INTELLECTUAL HISTORY

HUMPHREY CARPENTER:

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102pp. 0 19 283016 3

A. J. AYER:

Hume
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ALBAN KRALL-SIEBNER:

Pascal
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PETER SINGER:

Marx
82pp. 0 19 287510 8

ANTHONY KENNY:

Aquinas
81pp. 0 19 287500 0
£3.50 each (Paperback, 95p).
Oxford University Press.

Fifty years ago there was Bonin's Sixpenny Library, the volumes in uniform orange paper cover, sewn, about eighty pages 6 1/2 by 4 1/2—could not dream of measuring them in centimetres. The type was clear and elegant, the paper—well, not exactly fine, but better than any paperback publisher could now afford. Times and the appearances of things have changed. We now have the new Oxford series of Past Masters, with titles in two colours on a black background from which the portrait of the Master in question looks whitely, in a pattern of squares, as if he were looking through the glass of a shower. Shiny of course, with the author and title repeated with commendable clarity on the spine. About eighty pages, slightly larger than Bonin's. Price 95p, in paperback.

It is no criticism of Oxford University Press, who have made a good job of the production by current standards, to say that the new series belongs to a more tawdry as well as to a more expensive world. It would be interesting to know the print runs required to keep the survival of Bonin and the Past Masters respectively; the Sixpenny Library, however, can hardly have been a notorious piece of elitism. A single specimen is all that remains on my shelves, although before the war a labourer on a wage of £2 10s could have acquired a whole hundred of the series in a week, if he had been prepared to forgo food, drink, shelter, and all the necessities of life, and might without hardship have acquired a hundred in the course of a year. Had I been willing to forgo all those necessities, when I started my first job, at the admittedly excellent salary of £300 a year, I could probably have bought the whole long series in a week.

These are vulgar details. Are the two series really comparable? The first six Past Masters are, in my respectful opinion, the volumes on Dante by Giorgio Holmes will be reviewed separately in a subsequent issue of the TLS, and the twenty-seven volumes announced as "forthcoming" contain such hopeful matters. We are to have *Augustine* by Henry Chadwick, *Bacon* by Anthony Quinton, and *Tolstoy* by Henry Gifford, to mention only three. The Benn Library had Dante by Cesare Foligno, *Shakespeare* by G. B. Harrison (the OUP promise to reprint this volume), and *St. Augustine* by Germaine Greer (on this subject) Oliver Cromwell by H. W. Bellot. A touch of panache about this last, no doubt, but the Benn was just a "Library". Most of the subjects were general.

The description the publishers give of the Past Masters is: "A new series of short, readable books on leading intellectual figures of the past, in which authorities on these thinkers explain their ideas, why they were original, and how they influenced the way we think today." The concept is good, and the series is a whole population of think-persons—or perhaps merely of a nameless mass all operating on certain assumptions, as meticulously for the most part, do—is more intelligible in relation to some of the "masters" than to others. Marx, certainly, Jesus, yes: there are strands in our pattern of prejudices, in our actual reflections, which would be widely recognized as

Of magisterial stature

By C. H. Sisson

moving more or less to those historical figures. Whether this is because they are "intellectual figures" in the sense in which Hume, Aquinas and Pascal are intellectual figures, must be more doubtful. What has swept Marx through our consciousness and keeps him edging there is certainly something different in character from his critique of Hegel, or indeed his other intellectual exertions, as he would have been among the first to recognize. There is a whole complex of historical and current phenomena which keeps him in mind, and one merit of a study of "Marx", *but out*, is that it helps one to make a disconnection between the German gentleman living in Hampstead who sent his daughters to an academy for young ladies and visited fashionable Continental spas, and the appeals which are now made in his name from Moscow to Mozambique and round the world to Moscow again.

With Jesus, who "did not write any books", as Humphrey Carpenter disarmingly admits, the problem is even worse. What is he apart from his crucifixion and its consequences, for in two thousand years the tangle has grown too thick for anyone to separate out the intellectual contribution of a certain Galilean? Even unbelievers may argue that he was not an intellectual figure at all. So anyone might, if he thinks of Hume or Professor Ayer. There was, of course, Socrates—not yet on the list but surely in "Intellectual figures"—who did not write books either, but even he would be difficult to separate out from the other and other virtuous men whose words purport to represent him. There is perhaps a difficulty about setting "Intellectual figures" primarily within the framework of their own personalities, as most of the others are, rather than within the framework of the intellectual and general history to which they have most meaning.

Carpenter does his best with this intractable problem. His essay sets out to examine the teaching of Jesus "in some detail, and tries to determine the character of that teaching, the result is inevitably the teaching of Jesus's contemporaries". It also attempts to "give an account of modern historians' and theologians' views of Jesus and of the Gospels in which his life is recorded". This is a kind of historical essay, but it is clear that it may be of "theological presuppositions of Christianity". No doubt these presuppositions were necessary to put the subject in a proper perspective of intellectual democracy. The result is inevitably a certain humanness of treatment, a book mainly concerned with "the ideas of Jesus" can only point to a moralist, and the final plea that "he was not just a moral teacher" is a plea as much as an intellectual one. It is a plea for a saint gesture towards "the supreme Jesus who was crucified for us on earth", as Dante had it. "Indeed at certain periods in the Church's history it can be said that the followers of Jesus drastically misinterpreted his teachings or overlaid them with views of their own". It could be that this is one of those periods; perhaps there is not any other kind.

Yet such difficulties are not confined to the supreme Jesus, and men for whom the claims made are infinitely more intelligible to the twentieth century. The case of George Holmes will be reviewed separately in a subsequent issue of the TLS, and the twenty-seven volumes announced as "forthcoming" contain such hopeful matters. We are to have *Augustine* by Henry Chadwick, *Bacon* by Anthony Quinton, and *Tolstoy* by Henry Gifford, to mention only three. The Benn Library had Dante by Cesare Foligno, *Shakespeare* by G. B. Harrison (the OUP promise to reprint this volume), and *St. Augustine* by Germaine Greer (on this subject) Oliver Cromwell by H. W. Bellot. A touch of panache about this last, no doubt, but the Benn was just a "Library". Most of the subjects were general.

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Departing from the norm

By Martin Harris

L. C. HARMER:
Uncertainties in French Grammar
Edited by P. Richard and T. G. S. Combe.
471pp. Cambridge University Press.
£30.
0 521 22233 8

L. C. Harmer's *Uncertainties in French Grammar* was to have been the first volume of a series entitled "The Anatomy of French", intended to make available the material which he had collected over a lifetime of painstaking and scholarly study of the morphology and syntax of French. The present volume, edited by two of his former colleagues, is now a revised and expanded version of the first chapter of his earlier work *The French Language Today* (1954), with subsequent volumes following a similar pattern; as a result of Professor Harmer's untimely death, there is at least the possibility that the remainder of his vast collection of material, which he presented with such enthusiasm during his years as Drapers Professor of French at Cambridge, may never see the light of day.

The work falls into five sections of unequal length. A relatively brief chapter considers the generally held view that the French are, as a nation, particularly interested in their language in all its aspects, and concludes that, at least among the more educated classes, this is indeed the case. From this, it follows, in Harmer's view, that one would expect clear and consistent grammatical rules, commanding some considerable degree of respect, "from writer to man in street"; instead, "the way they treat their mother tongue can only too fre-

quently be described as cavalier". Whether knowledgeable interest in and respect for one's native language should ideally be reflected in the way Harmer suggests is debatable; that they are not in fact so reflected is amply demonstrated by the current state of the language, whose uncertainties and inconsistencies the present work further highlights.

The second and third chapters deal with areas of morphological and syntactic uncertainty in contemporary French. The perspective adopted is essentially normative, with "aberrant" forms and constructions surveyed from both a historical and—where verification is still in evidence—a descriptive point of view.

A long section is devoted, for example, to the morphology of the verb *être*, while other more "central" topics include discussion of the forms of the present subjunctive of *avoir* and *être*, and the confusion often found between the forms of the past anterior and those of the pluperfect subjunctive. Chapter Three, much more substantial, considers such areas as participial accord, the uses of relatives and wrongly related participles and gerunds, with a great many examples illustrating the fluctuations of the contemporary language; as Harmer would put it, numerous examples of "violations of rules" or "aberrance and intelligence".

The core of the work lies in Chapter Four, an extremely detailed study of the syntax of the relative clause. A review such as this cannot hope even to summarize either its coverage or its conclusions; suffice it to say that this chapter reaches the ultimate limit of the methodology which Harmer adopts. An astonishing variety of illustrations and what must surely be an exhaustive survey of the views of other scholars and grammarians.

culminates in a lengthy analysis of recent trends in usage, again overwhelmingly documented with examples from all styles and linguistic registers. There can henceforth be little doubt as to what has happened or is happening in this important area of French syntax.

A final short chapter deals with the influence which grammarians themselves have had on the current state of the language and on the inconsistencies which continue to exist. In general, grammarians are seen by Harmer as being in no small measure responsible for contemporary uncertainties. The conclusion in Chapter Four may be taken as a summary of his own standpoint: "issue, as regards even ordinary constructions of everyday occurrence, in both the written and the spoken language, has still not necessarily been adequately stabilized—and this, despite the grammarians' ministrations over a period of more than four hundred years."

This handsomely produced book contains a huge amount of documentation for the French linguist. The reader will form his own opinion on Harmer's fundamental view that linguistic order and conformity are necessarily beneficial; whatever that opinion may be, the work will stand in its own right as a monument of traditional scholarship.

A French/English bilingual edition of the *World List of Universities 1979/1981* has recently been published (693pp, Macmillan, £25.00 333 26771 0). It lists all the universities and other institutions of higher education, including teacher training establishments, in each country. One learns, also, that the universities of Tokyo, New Zealand, Italy, and Israel share the distinction of having the longest long vacations—about four months.

Specific kinds

By Eric Korn

LUIGI ROMEO:
Rece Homo!
A Lexicon of Man
163pp. Amsterdam: John Benjamins D.F.35.
90 272 2006 9.

"Homo Natus de Muliere. Originally, a term reminding man of his existence as a consequence of his transitional life on earth. Nowadays, it carries several meanings, including both a per-son resigned to his destiny, in one who stresses an absurd process, of thought."

Dr. Luigi Romeo's catalogue of the adjectival attributes of Man is modestly described as "basically a reference tool of orientation for anyone interested in the achievements of Homo". It lists nearly a thousand flavours from "Homo arcticus" to "Homo abjectus" (a curious and interesting study, particularly for such show-placed millennium as the Palaeolithic, the Neolithic, the Bronze Age or the Palaeolithic of the Palaeolithic, the author has thrown in the adjectives attached by Roman writers to the noun *homo*, as have entries like *Homo quinquies* for a very quiet man, and *Homo albertinus* for a man from Almaty).

The theory behind this is that abstract notions arise from the particular, and that by heaping up specifics, till they ferment, some generalities will automatically emerge. But rotting grapes do not magically become brandy; a distillation apparatus is required. None of this would matter if Luigi Romeo were simply a *homo oscuro*, a self-employed *homo* (as Cicero said of Cicero for a crab individual). Rarely employed for a foolish person. But he is editor of *Ars Scientia*, Professor of Linguistics at the University of Colorado, and apparently encouraged to practise this pseudo-scholarship at public expense.

Armed hordes

By T. R. Davies

PIERRE PALLIOT:
La Vierge et parfaite Science des Armées
Facsimile reprint of the 1660 edition. Introduction by Jean-Bernard de Vailly.
Paris: Berger-Levrault.

Few books written on academic subjects in seventeenth-century Europe have been regularly consulted by succeeding generations and are still a source of reference to scholars today. But that was an age of flourishing scholarship in France in genealogical and heraldic studies. Living and writing at that time were Claude Méneustrier, Charles du Cange, Pierre Palliot, Marc Vaisseau de la Colombe and Louis Le Laboureur, whose works are still quoted.

Now after 320 years, a reprint by photo-process of the original edition of Palliot's *La Vierge et parfaite Science des Armées* of 1660 has made its appearance. The reprint has an informative introduction by Jean-Bernard de Vailly, Secrétaire Général du Centre de la Sigillographie et de l'Héraldique médiévale, and a learned contributor to journals in several European countries, which covers the author's life, family, work and influence on later scholars, supported by useful notes, a bibliography and list of sources.

homo and *homo-homo-homo*, so he inflates it with all the taxonomic names he can lay his hands on.

Now there is an elaborate formula for dissecting the synonymy of species names, which may be attached to a bone, to a description, more or less vague, to somebody else's description, but Romeo has not mastered the formulation. Moreover his self-imposed rules forbid him to list *Embranthus*, or *Australopithecus*, and he does not seem to understand about subspecies, or subgenus—the only one listed is *obsoletus*—the entries are without value. Superadded fossil names are mixed with superseded names for human races, coined by polygenists, with no consistent indication of current equivalents, if any. He solemnly lists *Homo sp.* which is just an onomase for "thingummy". And of course none of these geographic or anatomic distinctions add anything to the notion of Man. How curious, and *Homo sapiens*, indications to the contrary, do not belong in the same category of discourse. To muddle things further, the author has thrown in the adjectives attached by Roman writers to the noun *homo*, as have entries like *Homo quinquies* for a very quiet man, and *Homo albertinus* for a man from Almaty.

The theory behind this is that abstract notions arise from the particular, and that by heaping up specifics, till they ferment, some generalities will automatically emerge. But rotting grapes do not magically become brandy; a distillation apparatus is required. None of this would matter if Luigi Romeo were simply a *homo oscuro*, a self-employed *homo* (as Cicero said of Cicero for a crab individual). Rarely employed for a foolish person. But he is editor of *Ars Scientia*, Professor of Linguistics at the University of Colorado, and apparently encouraged to practise this pseudo-scholarship at public expense.

It is curious to see a listing of the ways in which man's humanity has been defined by those who think "sapient" is immediate or irrelevant: *homo faber*, *homo ludens*, *homo pugnax*, *homo triplex*, *homo victor* in *homo* (Cruceus), *homo*, *homo amicus*, *homo*—god help us—*semantics*. But this makes too brief a list, with Romeo's jejune definitions (go elsewhere to understand Rovalius' distinction between *homo*, *homo*—

scholarship up until the late nineteenth century, he repeated the legends of coats of arms said to have been borne by King Arthur, Charlemagne, the Confessor, Godfrey de Bouillon, and other prehistoric characters, but this is outweighed by his industry and accuracy in gathering and presenting such a great volume of information in an age which lacked the facilities for research enjoyed by scholars today.

Palliot based his work on that of a family relation, Louvain College, an advocate at the Parlement de Dijon and a dedicated heraldic scholar, who had conceived the idea of a textbook planned, not on the form of the French of the two previous centuries, but on the lines of an Ordinary in alphabetical order—until then an arrangement employed only by English scholars, e.g. Cotgrave's and Cooke's *Dictionnaire*. This he expanded and extended to include not only political divisions and charges, but also refinements of attitudes, professions, details of crowns, collars and other additions, with examples of their use, which English Ordinaries had ignored. While other writers illustrated particular terms with imaginary shields, Palliot supported his entries with engravings of the arm of actual families, past or present, among them those of one of his contemporaries, "Olivier de la Roche, General des Anglois" (in the voel, General des Anglois), he gives the majority of examples, he gives the location of the family, details relating to its members. Cases where charges are similar and might be confused, enabling the reader to differentiate and identify them.

This photographic reproduction has naturally preserved two centuries of errors in the original edition: on page 170 the letterpress is inverted, but the engravings are correct; on page 494 a repeat of those on page 493, the correct illustrations being inserted out of order on page 503. One phrase in "M. de Vailly's introduction" cannot be overlooked: "En Vierge et parfaite Science des Armées, les dictionnaires en langue française les plus consultés aujourd'hui".

Excavational expositions

By David Hunt

A. R. and MARY BURN:
The Living Past of Greece
288pp. Herbert Press. £9.95.
0 9069 02 6

As one who abandoned the profession of classical archaeology in 1939 to follow, successfully, two very different ones, I find it

popularity in the post-war world both gratifying and surprising. For whatever reason—I am inclined to attribute a great deal of the credit to Sir Mortimer Wheeler and a television quiz programme in which he played a leading part—more and more people are taking an interest in the subject, and growing numbers of British people are spending their holidays in Greece. To meet the needs of this better-informed public a different type of guidebook is required. It is difficult to see how the task could be better performed than by *The Living Past of Greece*. It tells you what you want to know when you are on the spot. Except for such show-placed millennium as the Argolid in the eighth millennium B.C. or the Palace of Knossos, the typical archaeological site cries out for exposition. Faced with half hidden in limestone blocks or withered asphodel the visitor needs a plan to show him what he is looking at and a historical account to show him why it is worth his doing so. In this book both needs are satisfied.

Robin and Mary Burn have both taught history and archaeology. His books on Greek history include a learned and fluent account of the Persian War, thanks to which his description of the battlefields of that war in this book are lucidly evocative. He knows the country well, and served there during the Second World War. His wife and co-author, who served with him in

Greece after attending the British School of Archaeology in Athens, is a practised archaeologist with experience of four seasons of excavation at Paphos in Cyprus. They both know what archaeology seeks to achieve. As a result, besides its obvious usefulness to the tourist, their book can be read with interest both when planning a visit to Greece and afterwards; it is also of permanent value as a brief record of all the most important excavations.

It is arranged on an ingenious plan combining history and topography. The framework is chronological. It may cause some surprise that the first place described is the neolithic site of Pithulaki on the island of Melos, but this follows logically from the plan. The civilization of Greece is maritime and its commercial and artistic exchanges have been carried out by sea. The first object that we can prove to have crossed the sea in trade was Melian obsidian, a volcanic glass which can be flaked into sharp blades, in great demand during the Stone Age. Blades which could only have come from Melos were exported to the opposite coast of the Aegean in the eighth millennium B.C. By the third millennium their production was greatly increased and centralized in a township perhaps built for that very purpose. In the second millennium the influence of Bronze Age Crete and, later, of Mycenae came to be felt. The chapter ends, three thousand years later, with the discovery in 1819 of the statue of Aphrodite, now the pride of the Louvre, and the comic-opera story of how the French Navy managed to seize it from the Turkish Bey of the island of Rhodes, a landing-party of marines and bribery.

There follows a specially valuable chapter on Pre-Palace Crete, a subject not often expounded in such detail in general works. Minoan and Mycenaean chapters deal with Crete, the Peloponnese and Boeotia,

with a section on the important Mycenaean discoveries recently made on the island of Keos. "The Making of Classical Greece" covers the great sanctuaries, the Argolid, the Aegean and Ionian islands (not much on Chios, I regret to see, but good on Samos), and ends with the battlefields of the Persian War. This is one of Robin Burn's specialities, and he reconstructs his battles with gusto and clarity; without venturing to sit in judgment, I may perhaps remind the reader that there have been other versions of the battle of Salamis.

Athens and late classical Greece is the subject of the next section. For a book of this kind and size the topographical description of Athens is masterly, being detailed enough without risking confusion, and by the end of it the reader has been conducted with affectionate facility through a history of Athenian political institutions. The Macedonian period takes in Olynthos, Pella, Vergina and Verria and the section on "Greece and her conquerors" ends with two Roman sites, Corinth and Salamis. The authors are equally at home with Byzantine civilization. The three great monasteries of Oslos Loukas, Nea Moni on Chios, and Daphni, receive the praise which is their due for their own merits and their importance in the history of European art. The Frankish period, for reasons explained in the preface, is treated more summarily but the fortifications of Rhodes provide a good ending to the book.

There are 38 photographs, half of them by Mary Burn. Every site is illustrated by a sketch map. This is a genre whose difficulties are well known to anyone who has attempted it. Minoan sites, labyrinthine by name and by nature, present special problems but the plans are clear, for example, and of Knossos, mercifully simplified, are admirably clear. The comprehensive topographical plan of Athens is the best and simplest that I have seen in this style.

Iberian itineraries

By David Mitchell

IAN ROBERTSON (Editor):
The Blue Guide to Spain
The Mainland
Fourth edition
589pp. Benn. £12.95 (paperback, £6.95).
0 510 01629 4

ELIZABETH DE STROUMILLO:
The Tastes of Travel
Northern and Central Spain
296pp. Collins and Harvill Press.
£4.95.
0 00 262826 0

This latest Blue Guide, compiled with wit and encyclopedic knowledge is excellent in its kind. The historical introduction vividly conveys the tumult and frustration of a country where "the intellectual and political desert left behind by Franco has only been partly irrigated" and governments quaver before the task of "steering the separate Spains through the intricacies of the modern world".

Travelist milking, notably in the form of interchangeable charges to view this or that ecclesiastical "treasure", is castigated (and rightly so). Solid banquets of learning are interspersed with such arcane topics as "the sign of the cross" and "Homenaje a Dones" and "Women" and "Men" respectively—and an enticing

biographical note hinting at "much curious information" in "the once-restricted British Naval Intelligence Geographical Handbooks".

The Olympian perspective befitting a writer who lives at Pedraza de la Sierra high in the Guadarrama is accompanied by some sharp criticisms of the "new" Spain. One is reminded that Basque "extremism" was provoked by a situation in which "certain over-policed areas resembled provinces under occupation by foreign forces" and the Guardia Civil is described as "a strong but singularly ineffective arm of the law... seldom officious but not invariably civil". True enough, some years ago in Betanzos, near La Coruña, I asked a *guardia* how best to reach a certain point. "What's the hurry?" he growled and, taking his implied advice, I grew to love Betanzos and met people who made my stay in Galicia an unpremeditated joy.

Elizabeth de Stroomillo is one of the most knowledgeable and engaging of travel journalists and her new book reflects both these qualities. But it brought to mind that uncivil but salutary rebuff I wish she could have lingered, in transit and in prose, rather than strain to be so relentlessly comprehensive (no one can compete with the *Blue Guide* on that score). Charlemagne and Sir John Moore's Retreat seem

to dominate the scene and in general "history" clogs the narrative wheels. Compared with Mr. Robertson's august progress the impression is of a chore completed with a sigh of relief—and rounded off in fit the title, with some regional recipes. A pity, because there are signs, for instance in the author's childhood memories of the Basque country, close-ups of the "new" Spain. One could have done more to fulfil the foreword's promise of "idiosyncratic" treatment.

One thing these two books have in common—a too-faithful upmarker horror at the impact of mass tourism and the democratization of prosperity. For Mrs de Stroomillo León's industrial influence is "bulging with ugly new developments". Mr Robertson shudders at Benidorm's "polluting plays" (yet how very entertaining they can be!) and suggests that Torremolinos should be bypassed. Yet as I know, having lived in Torremolinos, I can assure you that their own fascinating, if instant, history, their poignant ruins. Huge, derelict open-air nightclubs; peeling, rotting-like posters of high-kicking chorines fronting congregations of rusting metal chairs; failed boutiques; the cracking concrete tiers of abandoned dolphinariums; half-completed, half-populated "urbanizations"; heroic, lovingly embroidered legends of the roistering pioneers of the 1950s and early 1960s.

Huntingdon hoard

By Geoffrey Naylor

Guide to Literary Manuscripts in the Huntingdon Library
539pp. Huntingdon Library, California.
\$35.
0 87328 102 0

This massive compilation forms part of a four-volume guide to the Huntingdon Library's vast manuscript resources, of which the American history section has already been published, and the British historical

manuscripts and the medieval and Renaissance collections are due to follow in 1981.

The *Huntingdon Library Quarterly* has published useful checklists of parts of their literary holdings in the past, but the full range of British and American literary documentation available in San Marino can now be taken in. From single letters and literary manuscripts to larger literary archives such as the Conrad, Alken or Wallace Stevens papers, or even the 30,000 pieces of Jack London material, this conveniently arranged checklist will provide information of use to literary scholars of all periods.

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In northern skies

By C. M. Perrins

STANLEY CRAMP (Chief Editor): *Handbook of the Birds of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. The Birds of the Western Palearctic, Volume 2. Hawks to Bustards.* 695pp. Oxford University Press, £30. 0 19 857505 X

A team of twelve editors plus a very large number of other contributors are responsible for this, the second of a planned seven volumes on the birds of the Western Palearctic area (that part of the Old World north of about 20° N and west of a line roughly from just east of Novaya Zemlya, passing to the east of the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf, and ending in the Gulf of Mexico). This volume, as its title suggests, covers the diurnal birds of prey (here divided into two Orders, Accipitriformes and Falconiformes), the game-birds, cranes, cranes, ruffs and bustards. Some ninety-seven species are covered (including endemic and introduced breeding species); treatment varies from a few lines (e.g. Turkey, *Melospiza gallopavo*) to a maximum of about eighteen pages for the Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*).

With very few exceptions, the work adheres to the format of the first volume. Indeed, there are thirty-four pages of introduction in Volume 1 which describe in detail the methods and definitions used; these are not repeated so that some reference to the earlier volume may at times be necessary. With regard to the text, there are introductory sections at the beginning of each Order and family which describe the general characteristics of the taxon concerned.

All the expected subjects are covered under each species: field characters, habitat, distribution (including nesting range, world and West Palearctic ranges), population, movements, food, social pattern and behaviour, voice (with song), breeding (including a rather difficult-to-read annual cycle), which summarises breeding and moulting dates, plumages, molts, measurements, weights, structure and geographical variation.

Airborne brigades

By G. E. J. Nixon

J. D. BRADLEY, W. G. TREMEYAN and ANTHONY SMITH: *British Tortricid Moths. Tortricidae Ochetreinae.* 338pp. £40. 0 903874 00 7

British Tortricid Moths. Ochetreinae and Tortricidae: Tortricidae. 251pp. £20. 0 903874 01 6

Published by the Ray Society/ British Museum (Natural History) Publications.

When I was a boy I used to collect butterflies and moths. Later, I was attracted to other kinds of insects. But my love of Lepidoptera has never left me and that is why it is pleasant to have the opportunity of saying something about these two splendid books that have now come my way. Let me say at once that I think they should be regarded as a tribute to all those vibrant and enthusiastic butterfly and moth-lovers who did not pass out of a boyhood phase, commonplace enough, but were tempted to explore the deeper and more rewarding aspects of their hobby. It is their patient efforts that have revealed to us that we have in the British Isles a moth fauna that reaches the surprising total of some 2,500 species. Against this vast number, however, add up to a mere fifty or so different kinds. If you go to the right places you can be sure of seeing them; the moths, on the other hand, may be all around you, but, because with rare exceptions, they do not become

tion. All aspects are thoroughly documented by more than 3,000 highly condensed (though perfectly traceable) references. There are also a large number of line drawings in the text, mostly relating to behaviour, and many colour plates.

The colour plates deserve special mention. There are sixty-eight full pages of colour. Of these, twenty-three are of birds of prey in flight (and one plate may contain as many as a dozen illustrations). Another twenty-eight of the pages concentrate on the plumages of the individual species. All but two of these pages are divided into two plates, each half-plate containing a number of paintings of a single species (sometimes two). A typical plate contains, perhaps, half a dozen paintings of each species, illustrating each sex and a variety of plumages; among these there is usually one painting of a bird in flight and, except for the birds of prey, another of a chick. The last seven plates (sixteen of them in colour) are of eggs. These are grouped together at the back of the book (though rather unaccountably in the middle of the bibliography). The egg-plates cover only about sixty-eight of the species mentioned in the text; the vagrants being omitted.

I do not find all the plates equally pleasing. The pictures of birds of prey in flight, by Ian Willis, are very useful as an aid to field identification. However, not all the others seem so useful; some of the illustrations are very small though, admittedly, the only alternative would be to depict fewer plumages. As in Volume 1, the downy juveniles are not always very successful. They are difficult to paint and, in many cases, cannot have been seen alive by the artist. In the case of the young ruffs, the lengths of the legs seem to have gone a little wrong. In most birds the lengths of the tibia-tarsus and tarso-metatarsus are the same (they can then sit down without falling over); a number of young ruffs took mechanically unsound in this respect.

The foregoing is a résumé of the contents of the book; no one who has seen the previous volume will find much to surprise him. What

active until nightfall; their presence is unsuspected.

Lepidopterists find it convenient to divide moths into two sections: the Macrolepidoptera, comprising the larger, more conspicuous species, and the Microlepidoptera, a huge assemblage of mostly small moths with a wingspan varying from one quarter to three quarters of an inch. The Microlepidoptera have always appealed less to collectors than the larger moths mainly because their small size makes them more difficult to collect and preserve, and certainly more difficult to identify. Nevertheless, it is some of these smaller moths for which the authors of the two books under review have shown a pre-eminence. They have provided us with a magnificent place of work covering more than 350 species of the British Microlepidoptera. In the main, they deal with two groups, the Tortricidae and the Ochetreinae, though they take related accounts also some smaller related groups. Their treatment is to describe each species in detail, adding notes on life history, distribution and other matters, likely to be of value, such as the importance of some of the moths as agricultural pests. For instance, are particularly harmful to cultivated plants and fruit trees.

All this information is competently presented and indispensable to anyone making a serious study of the moths. It is not here that the moths attract the eye; the two books lie. Rather, it is the sumptuous colour plates that will beguile and fascinate the moth-lover. There are no less than forty plates in all, depicting 870 species in colour. With the help of these plates, there is hardly likely to be a tortricid moth that could not be accurately matched and correctly identified.

of the quality of the material presented. Again, as before, the work is massively authoritative and is going to be an irreplaceable source of reference. Criticisms, such as they are, should therefore be read in that context—minor hiccups in a generally very acceptable work.

First, the text, while a masterpiece of compression, is very terse. Granted, no one, unless in solitary confinement for long periods, is likely to read the book from cover to cover; but the text is full of so many references and numbers that it is often difficult to find one's way from one end of a sentence to the other. It would have been more interesting with barely any increase in length) had some of the more unusual aspects of any given species been stressed.

For example, Eleonora's Falcon, *Falco eleonorae*, has an unusual breeding season. The birds lay in midsummer so that they can, in autumn, "cash in" on the south-bound migrants as food for their young. This is noted, but what is not said is that the young birds put on a lot of fat, that, unusually for a bird of prey, the young become heavier than their parents; it may also be this fact that causes the young to be collected for food by man (one is reminded of the Australian mutton birds). Similarly, it might have been worth adding to the information on the clutch-size of the Partridge, *Pardipardip*, that this bird lays possibly the largest clutches of any bird (and there is actually one reference suggesting a slightly larger clutch for Finland than that given in the text).

There are two errors which may be worth drawing to the attention of readers. First, although the title-page says 1980, the authors (page 4) recommend the correction as being 1979. Second, the only monochrome plate of eggs has been printed wrongly. This was noticed and an erratum slip inserted saying that the plate is inverted and that the legend should be read from bottom to top. Unfortunately, the plate is completely reversed and the legend should be read from bottom to top and from right to left. But these minor grumbles should not, and will not, stop people using this fine reference work.

The two authors, J. D. Bradley and W. G. Tremeayan, are well qualified to write about these small moths. They make it everywhere clear that their interest in them is deep and of long standing. They have been fortunate, too, in having the help of two artists, Brian Hargreaves and Anthony Smith, both of whom are experts in the field of entomological illustration. The coloured plates are primarily the work of Hargreaves but the black-and-white drawings, showing how the caterpillars of many of the species appear together, the leaves of their food-plants, are the careful work of Smith.

The authors state that their aim has been to provide the amateur with the means of identifying his moths. This they have done but it is by no means the fault of their achievement; the professional lepidopterist, whose interest extends beyond the British fauna, will welcome the scientific text, especially where it refers to colour, which is a peculiarity of the wing-pattern of many of the moths and is displayed, for example, in an extreme degree by the species called *Adelpha hermia*, a particularly beautiful little moth, basically green in colour. Plate forty-seven shows no less than twenty of the colour forms in which it appears, all superbly painted by Anthony Smith.

It is not possible, in a short review, to do justice to the care and knowledge that have gone into the making of these two books; by very far people who are passionate about the moths, and their needs to be as, a touch of dedication. The authors say that for seventy years nothing comprehensive has been written on the British Tortricidae; in producing their two-volume monograph they have now made good this neglect and as a result deserve the highest praise.

In order of appearance

By Redmond O'Hanlon

NICHOLAS HAMMOND and MICHAEL EVERETT: *Birds of Britain and Europe.* 256pp. Ward Lock, £9.95. 0 70603 6040 0

Birds of Britain and Europe is the latest in a series of large-format books of photographs; it has been designed by Roger Phillips. I had often wondered how his immensely successful technique for flower identification, in an earlier volume, of arranging the photographs in the chronological flowering order of the plants, could be applied to birds and this handsome and important book provides some very interesting answers. Only a chloroformed parrot would suffer its portrait to be taken on "5ins x 4ins size, Daylight Ektachrome 66 using a DeVere camera and a lens" in a studio where "the light source was a 2 x 3ft Fish Fryer head and strobe boxes with an output of up to 13,000 Joules", which is how Phillips compiled a leaf index to another of his subjects, *Trees in Britain, Europe and North America*. A chronological order by the calendar would only help for our migrant birds.

Here he has had to content himself with a collection of other people's photographs. He has arranged them according to their depleted species' first appearance on earth, although this is not as helpful for those birdwatchers pitifully unequipped with time-machines to take along with their binoculars, as an arrangement of geographical space by obvious habitat. Likewise, the mere difficulties of photographing birds make the theoretical claim that "artists do tend to draw idealized creatures" whereas photographs show us the real, living bird, less tenable than it is in the debate about the representation of flowers and trees. Photographs taken with very long lenses at wide-open apertures to catch all available light themselves produce idealized crea-

Sinking swimmers

By Alwynne Wheeler

ANTHONY NETROY: *Salmon: The World's Most Mysterious Fish.* 204pp. André Deutsch, £7.95. 0 233 96856 3

More books have been written about salmon than any other kind of fish. In the nineteenth century and up to the First World War many of them were anglers' reminiscences of days of fishing, although a few were concerned with the natural history of the fish, an early example being Humphry Davy's *Salmonia* of 1827, which combined the great chemist's scientific outlook with his love of fishing. Since the Second World War there has been a notable change of emphasis. Pure angling books have become scarce, studies of the biology of the animal, having taken their place, and a new genre has arisen in books on the management of salmonid fisheries.

Essentially this change has been brought about by the status of the fish. Where once the salmon was plentiful and afforded sport for a large number of anglers it has now become scarce, fewer anglers fish for it and none enjoy the success of previous centuries. This scarcity is reflected in the fishery biologist's anxiety to manage the remaining stocks as effectively as possible.

Anthony Netroy's new book (he wrote *The Atlantic Salmon: A Vanishing Species?* in 1968) recounts the past status of salmon stocks, their present pitiful scarcity and the factors which have caused this decline. There are two main groups of salmon, the Atlantic salmon, found along the European coasting, Greenland, and the North American Atlantic coast south to the Hudson River; and the Pacific salmon, of which there are six species,

—only their eyes, upon which the photographer has been taught to focus, will be clear, all else will have and diffuse romantically away into the uniform green of under-vegetation or the blue of impossible skies.

That said, this is an excellent book which triumphantly fulfils its own intentions. With a Collins field guide or whatever for instant identification, it will enable anyone to check his hasty sunrise water notes, by two officers of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, are arranged under the headings of identification, voice, habitat, food and breeding, and are plenty and accurate. The distribution maps are easy to interpret. The small pictures of birds in flight are not only technically spectacular, they often seem to capture the "jaz" of the bird—its voice, its movement. It was a good idea to include details of the typical prey remains of the raptors. There are only a few pictures of semi-starved birds caught at the nest, and only one of the Ruff, Warbler, where part of the complex process of looking at bird-pictures—the unspoken feeling that we alone are looking at this particular bird and for the first time—is offensively denied us by the presence of a fly on its leg.

Lastly, the authors need not be difficult about their introduction of another bird book into the media. It is worth buying for two plates alone. Frank V. Blackburn, despite one or two shots of suspiciously captive-looking falcons, has produced breathtaking pictures of a pair of nightjars and of a woodcock. Here the claims which he introduces makes for photograph are fully justified, the intricate camouflage of greys and browns and buffs, the light and shade in the speckles and bars of the plumage of the living bird, against the pecked bark and dry moss, the leaf litter of the heath or woodland floor, are best believed in a photograph. And, despite the fully detailed depth of field of view we are given of them, how very mysterious and suggestive of their own world different worlds these birds are.

distributed between Japan and

Arctic Siberia and between Alaska and California. All these salmon species spawn in freshwater then make their way to the sea for a period of feeding before returning to spawn in rivers. All the Pacific species spawn once and then die. Some Atlantic salmon survive to spawn a second time.

It is this migratory habit which has made the salmon so vulnerable. Pollution of the lower reaches of rivers, the creation of navigation locks and weirs and the discharge of toxic substances to the water led early on in the Industrial Revolution to the diminution of salmon runs. The use of rivers for hydroelectric power and the creation of dams to regulate the flow of rivers of private water for irrigation, were just developments (the latter particularly on the American Pacific coast) which diminished the stocks in which had to be added the effects of overfishing, in many cases by commercial fishers which had already destroyed their own salmon stocks.

The result of this crisis in management of the world's salmon stocks is that the Atlantic salmon is now scarce, even extinct in parts of its former range, and the world stock is greatly reduced; only Norway, Sweden and Iceland appear to have been successful in halting their stocks. The Pacific salmon have also suffered an alarming decrease in both range and numbers, although they have, in general, been less severely affected. Mr Netroy presents a detailed and lucid account of the present state of the world's salmon, it is an impressive and depressing but it is profoundly and helpfully restoring the fishery biologist's abundance. If valuable fishery stocks the salmon cannot be conserved, what hope is there for the other animals of the world?

Highland hierarchs

By William Boyd

ALLAN MASSIE: *The Last Peacock.* 185pp. The Bodley Head £5.95. 0 370 30261 3

"I told you Scotland was weird" observed an astonished southerner on witnessing the antics of the characters in Allan Massie's second novel. Under the circumstances it is a restrained judgment, considering that the *season* has just encountered two well-bred drunks in the lobby of the Perth Station Hotel at breakfast time, one of whom is clutching the body of a dead peacock. All of which may seem as if Massie is repeating the same old comic tone of his first novel—which was likened to Waugh's early satires—but in fact *The Last Peacock* is a different book altogether.

It covers several weeks in the life of a large and diverse family who have gathered in a Perthshire manse to await the death of the old grandmother who is the family's head and being split. Most of the action—fairly inconsequential—drinking, chatting, visiting—is seen through the eyes of Belinda, a sad divorcee exiled in London. But the central figure is her brother Colin—the last peacock of the title—a lazy inebriate with a cynical, iconoclastic manner who in the course of the novel manages to offend his primmer relatives and neighbours with delightful regularity. As the grandmother quietly slips away, various events and relationships intrude upon the narrative. There is a half-hearted attempt to form a right-wing organization which will restore hierarchy and order to British life; Belinda contemplates and finally

consummates an affair with her young lover; and there is a great deal of talk—long conversations in pubs, at dinner parties, during late night booze-ups (the alcohol consumption in the novel is enormous)—all to do with, not to put too fine a point on it, the meaning of life in the late twentieth century.

Colin and Belinda are presented to us as Romantics, nineteenth-century figures temporarily and impermanently out of joint with modern times, a factor which explains their aimless and unsatisfactory meanderings. Belinda's gay brother comments:

"The trouble with you and Colin, ducky, is you're Romantics. In the last quarter of the twentieth century, you still have a picture of yourselves that was formed a long long time ago. We've all got to settle for something a lot less than dreams these days."

But it's clear that it is not only they who are disappointed and anachronistic but also the society they belong to. For, among other things, *The Last Peacock* offers us an acute and fascinating portrayal of the Scottish landed gentry. A rare breed, educated at stern Arnoldian Scottish public schools, with Home Counties accents, pursuing respectable careers as accountants, solicitors and farmers, they seldom venture from their rural strongholds. Massie knows them and their foibles well, as his expert portraits testify, but in one crucial respect, it seems to me, he has got them wrong.

The characters in *The Last Peacock* are, almost without exception, far too thoroughly imbued with the tradition of the nation. This owes less to social reality than to the literary tradition Massie seems to follow.

Turning the tables

By Marigold Johnson

SIÂN JAMES: *Another Beginning.* 209pp. Collins £5.95. 0 00 222057 1

On page one, Alan (handsome and

in his grey pin-stripe) announces to Meg that he is leaving her, their two small daughters, and Bristol for the middle Devon and London. By page thirty, the young kind-hearted student ten years younger than Meg has moved in as lodger and lover. The brisk matter-of-fact pace, the absence of self-pity and the precise selective detail are as much the hallmarks of Siân James's style as *is a life*, *East is female*, as the extroverted feminist neighbour Frances might bossily have told Meg, whose brown floppy hair and old green duffel have neverthless enchanted beautiful Ben. It is, of course, a brief love. Light years from *Chéri*, or that great film *Le Diable au Corps*, the pattern is familiar enough—attempting to please, by hot, strong youth, mother/mistress fearful of loving too much. But Ben and Meg belong, too, in the parts of the novel, to a much more serious love that she recognizes she must give to another, and can later choose, without dogmatic proselytizing, to

become the breadwinner, playing the brokenhearted Alan. Outraged when, early on, Frances hints that being "truly civilized" might mean taking on a by-blow baby of Ben's (so let a student mother finish her degree), Meg ends by proposing to turn those very tables and herself exchange kitchen sink for university.

Another *Beginning* is, indeed, almost too symmetrical, almost pleased at demonstrating the raptures and agonies of a love affair without losing sight of the daily trivia which keep life going. It is characteristic, and can seem irritatingly pedestrian, that the two are so often juxtaposed. Ben proclaims that love comes before his examinations, and if education is any good it should confirm his priorities; we then get a travel agency monologue on alternative transport systems to the east of County Cork. Such, however, was the deflating technique of Jane Austen, a model few would deplore. James knows her comic domestic territory down to each chopped onion and to the marker name for rubarb ("physic"); down to the moment when the two-year-old, hugged for poetically expressing happiness as "bubbles in my tummy", is promptly sick all over the car. This is not—or not yet—the territory from which great fictional masterpieces come, but quietly and humorously, with intelligent aplomb, James is capturing it and releasing her heroines from the dated demology of the sex war.

Under cover

Michael Baldwin's *The Gamecock* (160pp. Faber, £5.95, 0 571 11449 0) is a ribald, accurately detailed, speed through a fragment of the Peninsular War. A Spanish adolescent, whose peasant parents have been murdered by the French, flees to the British camp; becomes, seemingly effortlessly, Arthur Wellesley's body servant; and is seduced by the future Duke of Wellington on his first night of employment. Sequences of seduction, flattery and rape follow prodigally, and the novel's dramatic focus, some of the author's discomfited early nineteenth-century military life—though most of the other discomfited, a shade less graphically and frequently described, are also

present in Pedro's account of the campaign.

Comedies of mistaken identity are as good for laughs as most forms of humour in literature, and Michael Baldwin's extra-slim volume is an honourable addition to the genre. The build-up of hints that tradition leads us to expect is missing, however. Little other than the punning title and the hero/heroine's tendency not to uncover more than face, hands and feet (no matter how wounded or dirty, whatever the condition) is filled in. The novel's dramatic focus, some of the author's discomfited early nineteenth-century military life—though most of the other discomfited, a shade less graphically and frequently described, are also

The men's room

By Lindsay Duguid

GERALD GREEN: *Cactus Pie.* 248pp. Melbourne House, £5.50. 0 86161 018 0

The stories collected in *Cactus Pie* have, according to the blurb, "delighted the readers of such magazines as *Playboy*, *Argo* and *Panorama*". It is easy to see why. They are essentially smoking-room anecdotes—amoral, salty, ideally suited both to whittling away the time and to confirming the prejudices of the American male.

Gerald Green specializes in the tall story; a sequence of events which rigorously follows its own logic. The joke is the improbability of such things happening in the setting of middle-America. The element of the surreal, at its best reminiscent of Roald Dahl or Borges, is not extraneous but fits in the smooth operation of confidence tricks or the laws of the market place; most of the stories turn on some super-successful deal or con. A gas-pump attendant

cheats his way to the ownership of the R & M Service Station; a senior citizen makes a going concern of a rural ashram on a visit to his home town; a watertight scheme for state-aided petty larceny brings down the New York crime figures. Two of the stories involve a possibly supernatural element, but in the main the plot is assisted by such prosaic assumptions as "policemen are always cor-

rupt" and "the army is an unstoppable bureaucratic machine".

Like all the best daydreams, however blurred around the edges the fantasy may be, the foreground is clear and familiar. The peculiar events involve ordinary citizens in recognizable locations, and an American preoccupation with drink, food, phallocentric sex and "life styles" is used to give the stories more resonance. Behind the counter Morris and Andy and the shiksa waitress would be pumping whipped cream on to banana splits, sleeping together BJs with mayo on the toast, squirting a thousand egg creams. This vision of America is not used to satirical effect. Even the least fantastic story, "Welcome to Fort Liquorville", which consists of a relentless unpleasant description of a community of yachtsmen whose hobby is drinking ("Berman felt vaguely frightened. Alone in a Kaffir kraal. Lost among the Jivaro. A captive of the Bonoc-fagors. In the crowded cabin, he was being crushed between two heavy women in pantsuits. One squeezed his hand."), we escape from the nightmare unscathed and untroubled. The final story, "Girl", the tale of a pretty girl, a nasty TV producer, an old man and his dog, shows how soft-centred these parables really are.

The author's excess of detachment is in the end pointless. He is not interested in insight or observation but in the manipulation of well-worn prejudices. The characters illustrate no more than traditional dislike of the silent majority, for Jaws, hippies, religion, the very old, the young and foreigners; and the reward for the reader is a momentary involvement in a fantasy of material success.

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